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THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART
CLEVELAND 6. OHIO

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FOR RELEASE

Mr. Mastroianni, Press
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at will
Mr. Metzler, P.D.
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Miss Kirkwood, March 22
(Sun P.)

A two-handled silver cup from eighteenth-century London has recently been given to The Cleveland Museum of Art by Mr. and Mrs. Warren H. Corning. The cup was designed and made by Anthony Nelme one of the great native-born English silversmiths working in London during this period.

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries many of the finest silversmiths in London were French Huguenots who had come to England ^{in 1685} after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, ~~in 1685~~. They created richly decorated silver while the English silversmiths produced simple, Queen Anne styled silver like this ^{Nelme} cup whose decorative value lies in the handsome profiles of the moulding of the cover and foot, the narrow band of moulding at the center of the cup's body, the acanthus leaves on the handles and the engraved coat-of-arms and crest. Excellent proportions give the cup its character as a work of art.

An elaborately decorated silver cup in the French manner now in Chicago, shows that Nelme was capable, however, of fashioning this style and that the simplicity of our cup was the choice of Nelme, or a client, and not a technical limitation.

Two-handled covered cups, or grace or loving cups, were the most popular pieces of presentation silver in eighteenth-century Britain. They were used as race trophies, to celebrate marriages, and for other similar commemorative purposes. The ^{Nelme} Corning cup just accessioned stands ten inches high and bears the coat-of-arms of Irvine of Bonshaw impaling O'Bryen which offers a clue to its original function since it was probably made for Mary O'Bryen, daughter of the Sixth Baron and First Earl of Inchiquin, Murrough O'Bryen, and her third husband, Colonel John Irwin of County Sligo, Ireland.

The Corning gift provides the Museum with an important example of English silver of the type not hitherto represented in its collection. Its importance as an object of decorative arts lies in the conformity ⁱⁿ of all ~~its~~ parts to the canon of taste of the early eighteenth century which produced what is perhaps the most consistently pleasing of all English silver.

M. March 6, 1962 (5.2.1.12)
H.C.

(over)